

Trojans -

A couple quick things about air quality and cross country.

1st :

The coaches are keenly aware of the issues surrounding air quality, health, and exercise - especially distance running. While we will push to get in every running workout we possibly can, we WILL NOT put athletes at risk.

The guidance provided by the Department of Education requires that practices and competition are called off when the AQI (Air Quality Index) is 150 or more. Personally, I am uncomfortable with athletes working hard in anything above 100.

We have several alternatives for getting in workouts during "bad air." Our first choice is to find somewhere to run where the AQI is acceptable. This isn't always possible and is difficult to arrange with our limited time window for practice.

Our second choice is an indoor workout. The school's new gym has an indoor cycling room that we can use, as well as space for strength work. We also have the option of my home gym, which has a HEPA filter as well as air quality sensors for AQI and CO2. But it is smaller and we'll have to group athletes and cycle them through. While both are much nicer than no option at all, there is only so much benefit to cycling and strength for distance runners, so if we can safely run, we will.

2nd:

We are pretty obsessively checking Purple Air for up-to-date AQI readings. The EPA readings are much less frequent and its harder to plan with them, so we use an algorithm the EPA itself developed to convert Purple Air numbers to the EPA standard. I have both an indoor and outdoor sensor at my house that we installed during Covid for my son's kindergarten pod.

We've been checking the Map regularly through out the day prior to practice to determine not just current AQI but also trying to see if there is a trend in one direction or the other. For example, on Tuesday, we thought IVC looked like a good place to move practice and were planning for that, when in the last 60 min before practice the AQI shot up. Though IVC was still "ok" the trend was sudden and poor and we cancelled practice. (Cancelled because it was a good day for another rest after our first few races.) Turns out, when I checked at 4:45 IVC was also in the 'bad' category.

Side Note - Determining AQI isn't very straight forward and you may be seeing different numbers than I am if your settings on the Purple Air Map are different from mine. After consultation and some research I have settled on the following settings:

Data Layer - US EPA PM2.5 AQI

Conversion - US EPA

Averaging period - Real Time

Reporting or Modified within - 10 minutes

3rd:

Even when the air is acceptable, some athletes may be negatively affected. This can be due to Asthma or another underlying condition, it could also be due to cumulative exposure over the day or days. Any athlete who isn't feeling up for the workout can get a modified indoor workout and/or skip that day's workout (though they should still show up and check-in!) None of the coaches will think negatively of an athlete taking care of themselves and needing a change or rest, just communicate with us.

Fingers crossed that this is the worst of it, but we'll be as prepared as possible if not.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or concerns.

Best,

w